

REMARKS

Claims 1-56 are pending in this application. A non-final Office Action mailed on September 19, 2008 has required restriction to one of three groups of claims under 35 U.S.C. §121. The Office Action has identified Group I to include Claims 1-11, 12-16, 17-22, 26-30, 32 and 52-56 stating that they are drawn to a distributor; Group II to include Claims 23-25, 33-35, 36-42, 43-46 and 49-51 for being drawn to a traffic manager; and Group III to include Claims 47-48 for being drawn to an apparatus.

In response to the Office Action, Applicants hereby provisionally elect, with traverse, the claims of Group I for further prosecution. However, Applicants respectfully submit that at least some of the claims are incorrectly grouped.

As noted in the office action, Group I is drawn to a distributor, such as the distributors illustrated in the Applicants' figures 4-6. However, Group III includes claim 47, which recites an apparatus that, among other things, includes an interface arranged to perform actions, including receiving an instruction, and if the instruction is a memorize instruction storing a mapping, and if the instruction is a delete instruction then deleting the mapping. The specification as originally filed, discloses, in one embodiment, a signal directs the receiving distributor to memorize the connection key and traffic management device's identifier, or to forget the connection key and traffic management device's identifier. See Applicants' specification, page 15 lines 2-7. Thus, claim 47, in one embodiment, recites an apparatus that is configured to operate as a distributor. Therefore, Applicants submit that because Group I is drawn to a distributor, Claims 47-48 (claim 48 depending from claim 47) should properly be grouped within Group I as well.

Applicants respectfully points out that claim 33 recites, in part, a method that includes transmitting a signal from a traffic manager to a distributor. Claim 33 further recites actions (b)-(d) each of which is performed at the distributor. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 33 discloses a method that is performed predominantly by the distributor and not by a traffic manager. Thus, Claim 33 should more properly be grouped, not within Group II, which is drawn to a traffic

manager, but rather in Group I, consistent with those actions being done at the distributor and not at a traffic manager. Claims 34-35 depend from claim 33. Therefore, Applicants submit that claims 33-35 should be regrouped into Group I based on the distributor versus traffic manager distinction cited by the pending Office Action.

Similarly, Applicants submit that Claim 36 is also improperly grouped. Claim 36 is a method claim that among other things recites receiving from a target traffic manager, a signal and processing the signal. Thus, because claim 36 recites actions of receiving a signal from a traffic manager, claim 36 does not, based on the Applicants' specification, recite the traffic manager. Instead, claim 36 is directed towards a method performed at a distributor. Claims 37-42 depend from claim 36. Thus, Applicants submit that claims 36-42 are improperly grouped, and instead properly belong within Group I based on the distributor versus traffic manager distinction.

Based on the distributor versus traffic manager distinction and the arguments above, Applicants respectfully submit that Group I should include: Claims 1-11, 12-16, 17-22, 26-30, 32, 33-35, 36-42, 47-48, and 52-56. Applicants believe moving the claims noted above into Group I is unlikely to result in a serious burden for examination purposes in a single application, as they are each directed towards a distributor, consistent with the pending Office Action's distinction. Therefore, regrouping of these claims is appropriate, and Applicants respectfully request such action be taken. This revised Group I is the group that Applicants respectfully prefers to elect.

Should the Examiner have any further issues regarding this application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number provided below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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